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## **TUSKEGEE AIRMEN AT CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN MEMORIAL**

Perhaps the most unique offering in the memorial's outstanding Black History Month series in February (which also included fine programs on genealogy, runaway slaves, manners as taught by Dr. Brown, and the Brown Memorial Singers) was an afternoon with Tuskegee airmen. Attendees at the program on February 18 filled the 300-seat Bethany United Church of Christ to capacity. Many guests left due to lack of space.

The Tuskegee airmen were blacks the government recruited as an experiment during World War II, a test some in the military and society expected to fail. At that time many considered blacks mentally inferior to whites and unable to master flying. The airmen disproved such ideas. The speakers noted that more than 925 pilots earned their wings at Tuskegee Army Field in Alabama. About 450 pilots went overseas to fly fighter aircraft for the Allies; 66 pilots were killed and 32 became prisoners of war. About 350 pilots are still alive. The training also produced thousands of navigators, bombardiers, and support personnel.

Six original Tuskegee airmen appeared at the memorial. They included Dr. Harold Webb, a leader for years in the CHB Foundation, and Wilson V. Eagleson, who attended Palmer before becoming an airman. The men said that before their unit took to the skies, the United States was losing about 65 of every 100 bombers on a mission. The veterans reported that once the airmen began escorting bombers to their drop sites, no plane was ever lost under their watch. The airmen became known as the red-tail angels for the vibrant red tails of their aircraft.

In training the airmen were segregated from whites. Their unit name was followed by "seg," meaning "segregated." One speaker said white and black airmen were not allowed to sleep or eat together in or out of the military but shed blood together in battle. Another airman said the compassion of the black instructors enabled him to make it through the training. He said that if he had had basic training under white instructors, he would not have made it due to their crude and rough language.

Another speaker said the airmen were trained not to think, but to react to situations (not fear) during the time of danger.

Mr. Eagleson recalled his comrades as "the greatest flyers this nation has ever seen" and asked the audience to respect all American veterans, especially the Tuskegee airmen and Vietnam veterans, who were not welcomed home with open arms.

History classes from North Carolina A & T State University and Eastern Guilford High School attended the program to hear the stories of the airmen.

(Linda Reid Jones)

## **HISTORY BOWL 2001 BEGINS AT HISTORIC EDENTON**

Historic Edenton initiated the section's twenty-first annual History Bowl competition on February 5. Some readers will recall that Rob Boyette held the first History Bowl at Bentonville Battleground in 1981. Other sites completing their 2001 History Bowls in February were Aycock Birthplace and Bentonville. Upcoming contests in March will be sponsored by Duke Homestead, Brown Memorial and Alamance Battleground (jointly), Fort Dobbs, Vance Birthplace, and Polk Memorial and Reed Gold Mine (together).

At Edenton this year teams from the northeastern area of the state competed for first- and second-place trophies, with the winner slated to represent the region at the statewide games in Raleigh on May 17-18.

This year marks Historic Edenton's seventh year of participation in the section's History Bowl program. Our first-place winner for 2001 is a school which has been with us since our first games in 1995. The Hertford County Middle School, coached by Wallace Johnson, will be our representative at the Raleigh finals.

The Edenton staff was very happy to have Ed Morris, curator of education, and Cliff Tyndall, Historic Sites representative at the Eastern Office, with us for the competition. Both joined with the permanent site staff in officiating the games. As he has done each year, Cliff moderated the final game. Historic Edenton wishes to thank Ed and Cliff for their assistance.

(William B. Strong)

## **A NEW LOOK FOR AN OLD SCHOOL AT AYCOCK**

Oak Plain School was built in 1893 in the Wayne County community of Nahunta. One teacher taught children in grades one to seven, and the average school term was fourteen weeks. In 1916 Oak Plain was closed as part of a movement to consolidate local schools. The structure was later sold and served as a church and a packhouse before it was moved to Aycock Birthplace in 1961. The building is now used to interpret school life in the late nineteenth century. Until 1994 it also served as an auditorium.

In May 2000 George Fore, an architectural conservator, conducted a paint analysis of the school's interior. He discovered that the building had been painted twice during the period it was a school. The original color was a medium blue-gray and the second a medium blue with a high gloss finish. When the building was restored in the 1960s, it was repainted to match the second color scheme. Over time this faded to a yellowish green.

We recently decided to return the classroom to its nineteenth-century appearance. In early December the desks were moved out, the blackboards were covered with brown paper, the artifacts were moved to the visitor center, and inmate painters from Neuse Correctional Center went to work. The classroom is now light blue in color. The new color scheme makes the school seem more period in appearance and also brightens the room considerably.

Efforts are also underway to copy a ca. 1900 Wilson County teacher's desk to replace the desk in the school now, which held a slide projector when the orientation program was shown there.

(Tammy Medlin)

## MACREN HOLDS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP

The Mountain Area Cultural Resources Emergency Network (MACREN) held a workshop, "Disaster 101: Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Prevention for Cultural Institutions," on January 29 at the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville. The first in a projected series of training programs for western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, the venture attracted sixty-two participants from the Asheville area, eastern Tennessee, South Carolina, and southern Virginia.

The workshop was presented by Lynn Savage (Carl Sandburg Home), Laura Overbey and Eileen Heeran (Biltmore Estate), Jeff Futch (Western Office, Archives and History), and Kim Hewitt (Wolfe Memorial). We also featured a guest panel of specialists: Larry Rankine (head of security at Biltmore Estate), Harley Shuford (former head of Asheville-Buncombe Arson Task Force), and John Horton (restoration specialist at the Western Office).

Because we are a nonprofit organization, MACREN charged a minimal fee of \$15 per person for the workshop (in contrast with the \$95 per person charged by an archival society for the same type of workshop). Funds received were used to cover the rental fee of the auditorium and the cost of catered lunches. Due to the unexpectedly large number of participants, we were also able to put aside a small profit to use as seed money for the next workshop. Response to the initial workshop was excellent—most of those attending felt that the information was very useful and were interested in attending future MACREN workshops. For the remainder of 2001, we plan to hold at least two more workshops. At this time, we intend for them to cover the topics of writing a disaster plan and recovery of media archives (such as photographs and audio tapes).

Steve Hill of Wolfe Memorial originally helped put MACREN together after the fire at Wolfe, along with Lynn Savage of Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site. I am currently serving as a board member and secretary/treasurer. The purpose of the organization is to provide member organizations and area museums, archives, libraries, and historic sites with disaster response assistance; serve as a source for disaster preparedness and response resources; and provide disaster preparedness and response education for area cultural institutions. Membership in MACREN is completely voluntary and currently includes ten local institutions, including Thomas Wolfe Memorial and Vance Birthplace.

(Kim Hewitt)



## Bonner House Featured in Publication

Historic Bath's Bonner House appears as a full-color photograph in the North Carolina Film Commission's new publication, *North Carolina On Location*. The house shares an open page with major actors Sean Connery and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Maybe Bath will become a major movie setting!

(Gerald Butler)

### SPRING PILGRIMAGE OF OLD HOMES IN EDENTON

The visitor center operated by Historic Edenton has been designated as headquarters for the Biennial Spring Pilgrimage of Homes to be held on April 20 and 21.

The event, sponsored by the Edenton Woman's Club, is a chief fundraiser of the organization, with profits earmarked for historic preservation projects in the town. Advance planning for this year's pilgrimage envisions attendance of between 2,500 and 3,000 people. Most of these guests will be entertained at the visitor center. The center will provide a ticketing facility, rest room facilities, the James Iredell Association gift shop, and an information desk for attendees.

There will be twelve private homes—all one hundred or more years old, with two dating to the eighteenth century—open to visitors. In addition, five of Edenton's churches (including St. Paul's Episcopal, 1736), various public buildings, and the Iredell and Cupola Houses will receive guests.

Besides the buildings open to ticket holders, a number of other events will be taking place at various sites around the town on one or both days. Free to the public will be a Celebration of the Arts at the local high school on Friday from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., organ concerts at St. Paul's Church at 11:00 a.m. on both days, and an antique car show on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Several local churches and organizations will be serving food for lunch and at other times during one or both days. The site's support group, the James Iredell Association, will offer cornbread with Brunswick stew prepared in an iron pot on the grounds as well as an ice cream social on the porch of the visitor center.

The site will extend its hours of operation both days, opening at 8:00 a.m. and closing at 6:00 p.m. in order to better serve the large number of people attending Spring Pilgrimage, which will be one of the major events of Edenton's 2001 schedule.

(William B. Strong)

### TOWN CREEK INDIAN MOUND HOSTS ANNUAL MEAL



Town Creek Indian Mound hosted a Chili Fest on Monday, February 19, at the site. More than twenty-five hungry colleagues assembled around noon to enjoy the chili beans as well as other delicious dishes brought by participants. The group was composed of staff from the Jordan House, craftsmen, Historic Sites field staff, and members of the Town Creek support group.

There were a couple of surprise guests at the feast. Most everyone was happy to see Tommy Stirewalt and his wife attend. Tommy is recovering well and seems to be in good spirits. We look forward to his return to work. Archie Smith and former grounds maintenance employee "Smoke" came in a little after noon. Both men were serving jury duty and were able to come from Troy for a few minutes on their lunch break.

After the meal many participants enjoyed viewing the new site audiovisual program, *The Mystery of Town Creek*. Others took advantage of the warm weather by strolling the grounds and nature trail.

The Chili Fest not only gave diners the opportunity to gain a pound or two but also provided like-minded people the opportunity to exchange ideas and strengthen ties. The Town Creek staff is already looking forward to hosting another meal next year.

(Rich Thompson)

### RECENT ADDITIONS TO SECTION LIBRARY

Listed below are short entries for newly cataloged items in the sectional library at the home office. All staff members across the state are welcome to use the library. The entire catalog (current update) will be sent by e-mail to sites upon request.

- ◆ Cobleigh, Rolfe. *Handy Farm Devices and How to Make Them*. 1910. Reprint 1996. 288 p. Index. Illus. HCF
- ◆ *Farm Conveniences and How to Make Them*. 1884, 1900. Reprint 1998. 256 p. Index. Illus. HCF
- ◆ North Carolina Historic Sites. *Looking Ahead to 2005: A Ten Year Plan*. 1995. approx. 75 p. Illus. Notes. 36.0
- ◆ Flink, James J. *The Automobile Age*. 1998. 456 p. Illus. Index. Bibl. 18.2
- ◆ Johnson, Spencer, M.D. *Who Moved My Cheese?*. 1998. 94 p. 35.0
- ◆ Whichard, Willis P. *Justice James Iredell*. 2000. 381 p. Illus. Index. Bibl. Notes. 14.0
- ◆ Leloudis, James L. *Schooling the New South: Pedagogy, Self, and Society in North Carolina, 1880-1920*. 1996. 338 p. Illus. Maps. Index. Bibl. Notes. 02.0
- ◆ Barzun, Jacques. *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life*. 2000. 877 p. Index. Notes. 38.2
- ◆ Thorpe, Earl E. *The Uses of Black History*. 1980. 14 p. Illus. 42.0
- ◆ Miller, Randall M., Harry S. Stout, and Charles Reagan Wilson, eds. *Religion and the American Civil War*. 1998. 422 p. Index. Endnotes. 38.2
- ◆ Thomas, William G, and Alice E. Carter. *The Civil War on the Web: A Guide to the Very Best Sites*. 2001. 199 p. Illus. CD. 38.2
- ◆ Link, William A. *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism: 1880-1930*. 1992. 440 p. Illus. Notes. Bibl. Index. 02.0
- ◆ Ham, Marie S., Debra A. Blake, and C. Edward Morris. *North Carolina's First Ladies: 1891-2001*. 2000. 122 p. Illus. Index. 34.5
- ◆ Bruccoli, Arlyn, and Matthew J. Bruccoli, eds. *O Lost, The Original Version of Look Homeward, Angel by Thomas Wolfe*. 2000. 694. Notes. Illus. 21.0
- ◆ Dowling, Kalie. "Hoop Skirts and Rifles: Wilmington, Blockade Runners and the Southern Homefront 1861-1865." 2000. 55 p. Bibl. Illus. Maps. 11.0
- ◆ Tunis, Edwin. *Frontier Living: An Illustrated Guide to Pioneer Life in America, including Log Cabins, Furniture, Tools, Clothing, and More*. 1961. Reprint 2000. 167 p. Illus. Maps. Index. 38.2
- ◆ Fore, George. "The Schoolhouse at the Charles B. Aycock State Historic Site Fremont, NC: Interior Historic Finishes Analysis." 2000. Approx. 30 p. Illus. Footnotes. Bibl. 02.0
- ◆ Fore, George. "The Alston House at House in the Horseshoe State Historic Site Moore County, NC: Interior Historic Finishes Analysis." 2000. Approx. 100 p. Illus. 13.0
- ◆ Boone, Nancy E., Ann Cousins, et al. *Locating Telecommunications Towers in Historic Buildings*. 28 p. Illus. 37.0



## TRIP DOWN SOUTH



Jann Brown shows off her strength by picking up this cannon with one hand. The cannon is actually made of fiber glass.



Clare Bass stands in front of the CSS *Jackson* and shows the size of the

On February 8-10 several Historic Sites staff members made a trip to the soon-to-be-opened Port Columbus National Civil War Naval Museum in Columbus, Georgia. We were very fortunate that this trip was not cancelled due to budget constraints, as tickets had already been purchased. Rob Boyette, David Latham, and Clare Bass from the Interpretations Team, Jann Brown from the CSS *Neuse*, and Eugene Brown from the CSS *Neuse* Gunboat Association, Inc. traveled to Columbus to make a professional visit to the new museum. Architects and the exhibit designer from Clearscapes, the firm under contract to design the CSS *Neuse* Civil War museum, also made the journey.

Formerly the Confederate Naval Museum, the Port Columbus museum has moved the remains of the CSS *Jackson* and the CSS *Chattahoochee* inside a new facility much like what is planned for the CSS *Neuse*. The information we received from this visit will be invaluable when it comes to furthering our plans to enclose the CSS *Neuse*. We learned a great deal concerning the funding for the new facility, the design of HVAC systems to control the environment around the vessel, and the scope of interpretation in this new national naval center. We saw many things we liked in this exhibit and a few things we think we can do better!

The official opening of the Port Columbus National Civil War Museum will be March 9-11, 2001. If you would like to learn more about the Port Columbus museum, visit their web site at [www.portcolumbus.org](http://www.portcolumbus.org).

(Jann Brown)

## NOTE OF THANKS

I would like to thank everyone who donated voluntary leave to me during my recent short-term disability. I was able to return to work on February 12, 2001. Everyone's thoughts, prayers, and time are greatly appreciated.

(Richard Burnette, Brunswick Town)

### ***THE MYSTERY OF TOWN CREEK IS COMING***



After many months of planning, research, and hard work, the new audiovisual program is up and running at Town Creek. Though not officially dedicated, the program is being shown to guests and groups. The response has been overwhelming. Annual visitors to the site have been very enthusiastic about the new program, but comments from first-time visitors are the most impressive. "Visitors are going out of their way to let us know what a fine film we have; response has been very positive," says site manager Archie Smith.

The project got off the ground about two years ago. Virgil Smithers and Kim DeCoste-Leighton worked with Dr. Linda Carnes-McNaughton throughout most of the process. Special care was taken to ensure that the new program was as historically accurate as possible while sensitive to the interests of Native Americans.

The Friends of Town Creek purchased a DVD player, LCD projector, amplifier, and other equipment and had the new slide show converted to DVD format. Jim Willard bravely led us through the installation process and is currently tweaking the system to achieve the best audio/visual combination.

Plans are being made for a dedication ceremony, although no date has been set. A "Hollywood" atmosphere, complete with red carpets, flashing marquees, and spotlights, may prevail during the event. "The narrator in the program is a jazz singer; I think it would be nice to have a piano on hand for a live performance," muses Smith.

(Rich Thompson)

### **FORT ANDERSON CIVIL WAR ENCAMPMENT**

The weekend of February 17–18, 2001, will be one to be remembered. Fort Anderson commemorated the 136<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the fort. Reenactors from many different groups entertained visitors to the site. Guests were able to walk around the fort and talk with reenactors on their own or take one of the many costumed guided tours offered each day. As part of the tours, groups listened to guides tell the history of the lower Cape Fear defense system and Ft. Anderson's roll in it. Once inside the fort, John Golden, a local storyteller and musician, engaged groups with his interpretation of a blockade-runner captain. As part of his talk, John also taught groups songs from the Civil War. Following John's interpretation, the groups were on their own to walk around various other ongoing historical demonstrations in the fort.

Morris Bass, always a big hit, talked about Civil War uniforms. Ladies cooked over open fires and even allowed visitors to taste hardtack. One group of reenactors brought artillery shells and torpedo models. A couple discussed Civil War medicine, while others simply talked about camp life. Small arms demonstrations were also part of the activities in the fort. The big bangs outside were, of course, the cannons. Three artillery pieces were fired from in front of Battery A every half-hour during the program.

Inside visitors had the opportunity to listen to Chris Fonvielle, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Dr. Fonvielle is the author of *Fort Anderson* and other books about the Wilmington area during the Civil War. Following his daily lecture, he signed copies of his books.

Overall, the weekend was a wonderful success. Approximately 50 reenactors provided excellent interpretation for the 1,100 visitors to the site. The weather cooperated all weekend long, and everyone—visitors, volunteers, and staff—had a great time.

(Jimmy Bartley)

**PROFILE: ANDREW DUPPSTADT**

Allow me to introduce myself. I am the new assistant site manager at the CSS *Neuse* and Richard Caswell Memorial. I joined the staff here on January 30 and am really enjoying the job. I am a native of Onslow County, born at the naval hospital at Camp Lejeune (yes, my dad was a marine). I graduated from Swansboro High School and earned a B.A. in history and a master's degree in public history from UNC-Wilmington. I am not exactly a stranger to state historic sites, having served as Mary Holloway Seasonal Interpreter and as a temporary employee at Fort Fisher. More recently I was a character interpreter at Tryon Palace. I also held a one-year, grant-funded term as executive director of the Carteret County Historical and Genealogical Society in Morehead City. Along with my duties at the CSS *Neuse*, I am an adjunct instructor of history at Coastal Carolina Community College in Jacksonville and Campbell University's Camp Lejeune campus.

Being hired as assistant site manager at the CSS *Neuse* was extremely exciting for me. I had been searching for a permanent position for the better part of nine months, and this job was a perfect match for my interests. I feel like my career began at Fort Fisher, so getting the job at the CSS *Neuse* was like coming back to where I belong—a Civil War site. I look forward to putting my talents and experience to work in my new position. The coming months will be a learning experience, but I am prepared for the challenge and excited to be a member of the staff here. Hopefully I will meet many of you along the way and get to know you better.

**BOBBY JOHNSON RETIRES AT BENTONVILLE BATTLEGROUND**

Bobby Johnson, site assistant at Bentonville, has retired after thirty years. Although I only had the privilege of working with Bobby for a month, I have known him since 1985 and have seen a lot of what he did to make the site nice for visitors. He was always first to work in the mornings and had the site open and ready for the staff and public.

Bobby worked hard to keep the grounds perfect all year. Whether cutting grass in the spring and summer, gathering pecans, or raking leaves and pine straw in the fall, the site's appearance was his foremost concern. Maintenance of the structures and walking trails was also Bobby's handiwork.

Always a fixture at reenactments and living history programs, Bobby stayed busy. He knew what to do and how to get it accomplished. Thousands of reenactors have cooked and kept warm at fires built with wood that Bobby cut. Without a doubt, no one in the section has cut as much wood; he even left a supply of wood that will last for many programs in the future. These are merely his more obvious contributions to the site. Small things, such as the trash run, opening and closing the gate to the trenches, keeping the truck serviced, and too many more to mention, are among the multiple jobs Bobby did daily. His retirement leaves a void that will be hard to fill. Bobby was an avid animal lover. Over the years, he kindly looked after many stray cats and dogs that took up residence at Bentonville, making sure that no stray went hungry.

The staff of Bentonville Battleground thanks Bobby Johnson for all he has done for the site and the section and extends best wishes for his retirement.

(Donny Taylor)